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Chairman: Mr. Maertens (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Belgium)

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In the absence of Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon), Mr. Maertens (Belgium), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 106: Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*) (A/C.3/58/L.7)

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.7: Cooperatives in social development

1. **The Chairman** reminded the Committee that, in addition to Mongolia, the following States were sponsors of the draft resolution: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, India, Myanmar, Nigeria, Panama, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the Sudan. The draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

2. **Mr. Gansukh** (Mongolia), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, informed the Committee that in operative paragraph 8 of the English version of the draft resolution, "to provide further assistance" should be replaced by "to continue to provide assistance".

3. He also informed the Committee that Barbados, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, the Congo, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Morocco, the Philippines, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

4. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.7, as orally revised, was adopted.*

Agenda item 108: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/C.3/58/L.3-L.6 and L.14)

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.3: International cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime: assistance to States in capacity-building with a view to facilitating the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto

5. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

6. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.3 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.4: Strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance in promoting the implementation of the universal conventions and protocols related to terrorism within the framework of the activities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention

7. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

8. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.4 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.5: Strengthening international cooperation in preventing and combating trafficking in persons and protecting victims of such trafficking

9. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

10. **Mr. Maalouf** (United States of America) said that the draft resolution reflected the consensus of the international community that trafficking in persons was a modern form of slavery and a cause for great concern. The United States assigned the highest priority to preventing and combating trafficking and had comprehensive legislation and a high-level inter-agency office dedicated to promoting international cooperation in that area. The United States had played an important role in the drafting of the resolution under discussion, at the twelfth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Vienna in May 2003.

11. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.5 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.6: Preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

12. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, should the Committee recommend the adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.6, there would be no need for financial resources beyond those already appropriated for the 2002-2003 biennium and budgeted for the 2004-2005 biennium.

13. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.6 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.14: Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity

14. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications. The following States had become sponsors: Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Eritrea, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela and Zambia.

15. **Mr. Zelioli** (Italy) said that the following changes had been introduced into the draft resolution.

16. The fourteenth preambular paragraph should read "*Looking forward* to the adoption of its resolution on the United Nations Convention against Corruption"; and in operative paragraph 21, the words "competent regional and economic organizations" should be replaced by the words "competent regional economic integration organizations".

17. **The Chairman** said that the following States had become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Armenia, Bangladesh, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, the Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Mongolia, Namibia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Uganda, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

18. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.14, as orally revised, was adopted.*

19. **Mr. Maalouf** (United States of America) said that his delegation welcomed the successful completion of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, the first anti-corruption treaty negotiated at the international level. It also welcomed the entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The fight against corruption and organized crime required significant international cooperation. Nevertheless, his delegation believed that in paragraphs 19 and 21 of the draft resolution the General Assembly should limit itself to urging States to "consider" the ratification of the two conventions, since it was the sovereign right of States to decide whether to sign or ratify international conventions and when to do so.

Agenda item 109: International drug control (*continued*) (A/C.3/58/L.15)

Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.15: International cooperation against the world drug problem

20. **The Chairman** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications. The following States had become sponsors: Algeria, Andorra, Belarus, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Japan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Zambia.

21. **Mr. Simancas Gutiérrez** (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, said that the following States had also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia, Austria, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, the Czech Republic, the Congo, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, France, the Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon,

Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Malaysia, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

22. He also informed the Committee that the following amendments had been introduced: in the fourth line of the ninth preambular paragraph, the phrase "the holding in Paris, on 21 and 22 May 2003, of the International Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, as well as other initiatives" should be replaced by the words "the initiatives in this regard"; in section II, a new paragraph 11 (b) should be inserted, reading "11 (b) Welcomes the adoption by the Transitional Government of Afghanistan of a national drug strategy, and notes the need for continued coordination with the international efforts"; in the same section, paragraph 12 should be replaced by the following text: "12. *Recommends* that adequate help be provided to Afghanistan in the framework of the comprehensive international strategy, carried out, inter alia, under the auspices of the United Nations and through other multilateral forums, in support of the commitment of the Transitional Government of Afghanistan, including the strengthening of 'security belts' in the region, and reaffirms that the response to this unique situation will not detract from the commitments and resources devoted to the fight against drugs in other parts of the world"; in section III, paragraph 5 (j), the words "subject to the availability of resources" should be inserted after the words "To provide assistance"; and in the same section, the following new paragraph 5 (b) should be inserted: "5 (b) *Welcomes* the holding in Paris, on 21 and 22 May 2003, of the International Conference on Drug Routes from Central Asia to Europe, and encourages the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other relevant international institutions to continue in their follow-up action on the recommendations of the Conference (the Paris Pact)".

23. *Draft resolution A/C.3/58/L.15 was adopted.*

24. **Ms. Groux** (Switzerland), supported by **Ms. Al Haj Ali** (Syrian Arab Republic), requested that, in future, amendments proposed by sponsors of draft resolutions should be circulated in writing to all delegations.

Agenda item 114: Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People *(continued)* (A/58/289; A/C.3/58/2)

25. **Ms. Ramiro-López** (Philippines) said that both in the report on the implementation of the programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples (A/58/289) and in the relevant chapters of the Economic and Social Council report on the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (A/C.3/58/2), the importance and urgency of meeting the needs and addressing the concerns of indigenous people around the world had been highlighted. Her delegation considered that the Permanent Forum, which had held its second session in May 2003, remained an important instrument for providing the Economic and Social Council with expertise and guidance on indigenous issues relating to economic and social development, culture, the environment, health and human rights. Given the lack of adequate time and resources to tackle all the issues that must be addressed, there was a need to focus on areas that had not been addressed by other United Nations agencies, in order to avoid duplication and to complement the work of the other agencies in the United Nations system.

26. Philippine law recognized the rights of indigenous communities in the country to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion and to use their own language. As defined in the Indigenous People's Rights Act of 1997, the terms "indigenous peoples" and "indigenous cultural community" referred to a group of people or a homogenous society (identified by self-ascription and ascription by others), who had continuously lived as an organized community on communally bounded and defined territory, and who had, under claims of ownership since time immemorial, occupied, possessed, and utilized such territory, sharing common bonds of language, customs, traditions and other distinctive cultural traits, and who had through resistance to political, social, and cultural inroads of colonization, non-indigenous religions and cultures, become historically differentiated from the majority of Filipinos.

27. Her Government had declared 1993 as Year of the Indigenous People in the Philippines to focus the attention of the public and private sectors on the problems and needs of the country's indigenous cultural communities. Subsequently, the period 1995-2005 had also been proclaimed as the National Decade for Indigenous People to underscore the efforts the Government was pursuing in that regard.

28. The 1997 Act stipulated that the State would recognize, respect, protect and promote the rights of the indigenous cultural communities, which were to be considered in the formulation of national laws and policies. To that end, the State would institute the machinery needed to guarantee the exercise of those rights and ensure that those communities benefited, on an equal footing from the rights and opportunities which national laws and regulations granted to other members of the population. Enshrined in the Act was the right of minorities to their ancestral domains, including the right of ownership, to develop lands and natural resources, and to stay in the territories. Also guaranteed was the right of those minorities to self-governance and empowerment through Government support for autonomous regions, justice systems, conflict-resolution institutions and peacebuilding processes.

29. The Government also valued the important role of indigenous communities in nation-building and had actively engaged the indigenous groups in the planning and implementation of socio-economic projects.

30. The issues raised in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (E/CN.4/2003/90/Add.3) had been or were being addressed particularly through the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of National Defence. Her Government, in partnership with the United Nations, other Governments and civil society, would continue to play a proactive role in addressing the needs and concerns of indigenous communities. The Philippines hoped that the General Assembly would adopt a United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people to serve as the showpiece of the International Decade and a helpful guide to national policymaking and international cooperation in promoting the rights of indigenes and recognizing their role in development.

31. **Mr. Abel** (Myanmar) welcomed the fact that, as the end of the First International Decade approached, the implementation of the programme of activities was being assessed positively. The second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, held in New York in May 2003, had been able to consolidate the aims and objectives of the programme. The Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development had noted the existence of 370 million indigenous people living in about 70 countries. The 21st meeting of the Working Group on Indigenous issues, held in July 2003, had contributed greatly to the cause of indigenes with its theme of Indigenous People and Globalization.

32. Myanmar had a population of 52 million, composed of 135 national races which had been living together from time immemorial. In practical terms, therefore, all of them could be termed indigenous. The national races living in the border areas and in the remote regions of Myanmar had been disadvantaged as a result of the topography of the land and the ill effects of the colonial divide-and-rule policy, which had kept them from developing. The Myanmar Government had been able to rebuild national unity after the civil wars that had dismembered the country. In 1992, a separate ministry for the border areas had been created. Initially, development programmes had been carried out only in those areas where peace and stability had been restored but were currently being extended to all areas where development had fallen behind. In seven states and two divisions, covering over 83,000 square miles, and inhabited by 5.3 million people, development programmes giving priority to projects that had to do with the construction of roads, bridges and hospitals and improvement in education, health, agriculture, electrification, communications and mineral exploration were being conducted. From 1989 to date, the equivalent of $506 million had been spent. Those programmes, in addition to transforming some border areas into modern towns, had come to strengthen the union spirit in Myanmar.

33. In 2000, the establishment of a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues within the United Nations had created an unprecedented opportunity for indigenous people to voice their social, cultural and economic concerns. That Forum must adhere strictly to its mandate as an expert and advisory body established under Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/22. In the view of his delegation, international

cooperation must go hand-in-hand with national programmes in order to create the conditions necessary for the sustainable development of the world's indigenous people.

34. **Ms. Tincopa** (Peru) considered that indigenous issues were crucial to understanding the distinctive characteristics of peoples and were linked to human rights, sustainable development and democracy. Peru had been working at the international, regional and national levels to achieve the recognition and protection of the human rights of indigenous peoples. At the international level, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had been an important step forward as it had allowed indigenous representatives to express their concerns and expectations. In addition, the establishment of a secretariat would allow the Forum to fulfil its mandate. Peru's participation in the Working Group on a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples had been noteworthy. In spite of significant advances in that area, outstanding topics still required constructive dialogue free of confrontational positions.

35. At the regional level, she noted the adoption by the Organization of American States of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Article 9 of that document established that protection of the human rights of indigenous peoples and respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in the Americas contributed to the strengthening of democracy and citizen participation. Further, in July 2001, the presidents of the Andean Community of nations had signed the Machu Picchu Declaration on Democracy, the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Fight against Poverty, thereby committing themselves to continue developing strategies and policies designed to re-evaluate the multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism of their nations, to promote full participation by indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities and to support efforts to promote and protect their fundamental rights and liberties. The cultural wealth of indigenous peoples stood in inverse ratio to their income, and poverty was more widespread among ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, it was essential to create the conditions necessary for indigenous peoples to be actively introduced into the development process. The Cuzco Declaration, adopted in November 2002 at the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Like-minded Megadiverse Countries, stressed the need to recognize the sovereign rights of countries of origin over their biological resources, including genetic resources, and to protect traditional knowledge, in such a way that those resources would not be used either without the knowledge of the countries or without agreements on the sharing of benefits.

36. At the national level, the National Commission of Andean and Amazonian Peoples of Peru, comprising representatives of the Government and of indigenous peoples and scholars, included in its goals the promotion, recognition and implementation by Peruvian society of the collective and individual rights of indigenous peoples, respect for the fundamental rights of such peoples, the institutional strengthening of the organizations representing them, and their self-determined and sustainable development, expressing their own identity.

37. The Government respected and recognized the ethnic and cultural identity of indigenous peoples, sought to strengthen their organizational structures in order to contribute to the economic and cultural development of Peru, and promoted democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental liberties, while taking intercultural and territorial factors into consideration in its development model.

38. **Mr. Nikiforov** (Russian Federation) said that throughout the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People issues that were of interest to indigenous peoples had been at the centre of attention, and much progress had been made in that area within the framework of the United Nations.

39. Representatives of indigenous peoples had participated on an equal footing with governmental delegations in the complex process of drafting the declaration of rights, and their contribution to the first two sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues had been outstanding. Furthermore, the participation of such representatives in United Nations conferences and meetings was steadily increasing, thanks to the Voluntary Fund established specifically for that purpose. Practically all the specialized agencies and programmes of the United Nations system had contributed in different degrees to the implementation of the goals of the Decade, working closely with the indigenous peoples. Questions pertaining to the rights and interests of those peoples had not been overlooked at any of the major conferences. Nevertheless, the urgent problems relating to the survival of indigenous peoples could not be

solved at the international level alone. Many goals could not be met unless States took appropriate measures.

40. In the Russian Federation, the survival and development of the northern indigenous communities posed a problem. In recent years the legal regime governing relations between the State and those communities had been strengthened. A number of laws provided for special rights for indigenous communities of few members, for a social, economic and cultural system respecting their differences, for the protection of their lands and traditions and for their use of natural resources. Of the 138 legislative instruments pertaining to the northern region, 30 dealt directly with the small indigenous communities. Nevertheless, it had been necessary to establish effective mechanisms at the regional and local levels for the implementation of the federal legislation. State assistance programmes were essential to the sustainable social and economic development of the indigenous peoples. One example was the State programme for the economic and cultural development of the northern indigenous communities of few members, which included the construction of housing, hospitals and schools, as well as farms for livestock-rearing. That programme had been continued until 2011 so as to create conditions for the sustainable development of those communities in their traditional surroundings, based on biospheric conservation, traditional use of natural resources and traditional economic structures.

41. The Russian Federation had developed a special federal programme called "Children of the North", in which the most advanced technologies were used to improve children's health care — of particular importance given the climatic conditions of the region — and the programme had also facilitated the children's integration into society. Their education was integrated into the Russian education system, based on the right to schooling in their native language and on education programmes at different levels that took into account the variety of constituent nationalities of the Russian Federation, as well as the different linguistic groups. The specific characteristics of the different locations and regions were also taken into consideration.

42. One of the priorities of northern economic policy with respect, in particular, to the indigenous communities was the achievement of a gradual transition from direct budgetary assistance to the creation of economic conditions conducive to regional development. That meant the establishment of an effective judicial mechanism of cooperation among States, businesses devoted to the exploitation of resources and major economic organizations which would solve the problems relating to the sustainable development of indigenous peoples.

43. Indigenous communities of few members had the same opportunities as the rest of the population of the country in terms of the exercise of their constitutional and civil rights and the implementation of administrative and criminal provisions. In spite of some degree of success, the Government was aware that much remained to be done to solve the problems within those communities, and was accordingly assigning priority to the protection of their rights and interests.

44. **Mr. Xie** Bohua (China) said that the international community shared the responsibility to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, safeguard the natural resources and the environment upon which their survival depended, and cherish their time-honoured cultural traditions. It was not merely a matter of preserving cultural diversity but also one of pursuing justice and respect for their human rights. Over the two past decades the United Nations had established the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the Working Group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which were all collecting information on the situation of indigenous people worldwide and making recommendations on how to protect them and promote their legitimate rights in the areas of the economy, culture, human rights and health. In their respective areas of focus, those three mechanisms had impressed upon countries the situation of indigenous people and helped to protect their rights. At the ninth session of the Working Group on a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, no agreement had been reached on the draft despite the enormous efforts made by States and representatives of indigenous people. Securing approval of the declaration, as the goal of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, had become one of the most pressing tasks facing the Organization. He hoped that the Working Group would adopt an even more flexible and constructive approach to facilitate the achievement of that objective.

45. The International Decade of the World's Indigenous People would soon come to an end and his delegation was in favour of an integrated assessment of all aspects of its implementation. The international community should take stock of the successes, as well as identify the gaps and shortfalls, in order to further the protection of the rights and interests of indigenous people in the future. As always, China would participate in the endeavour to advance the cause of the world's indigenous people.

46. **Ms. Lewis** (International Labour Organization) said that two ILO conventions, namely, Convention No. 107 of 1957 on Indigenous and Tribal Populations and ILO Convention No. 169 of 1989 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, were the only international legal instruments on the subject. Convention No. 169 marked a shift away from the integrationist and paternalistic approach of its predecessor and towards recognition of the value of the culture and institutions of indigenous and tribal peoples, their right to be consulted on decisions affecting them and protection of their social, economic, civil and political rights. In its 2003 Global Report on Discrimination, entitled "Time for Equality at the Workplace", ILO had noted that it was not possible to eliminate discriminatory practices against indigenous and tribal peoples in the labour market alone unless issues of education, land rights and other more general social and cultural rights were addressed.

47. During the second session of the Permanent Forum and particularly in the high-level panel and dialogue on indigenous youth and children, ILO had pointed out that in some risk areas, the worst forms of child labour could be found among indigenous people. Cases in point were debt bondage in South Asia, migratory agricultural wage labour in Central America and Mexico and trafficking in South-East Asia. In most countries, educational figures indicated low enrolment rates, poor school performance and high drop-out rates among indigenous children. Education should be adapted to the needs of indigenous people because for many of them, traditional education typically included learning traditional occupations. ILO had produced an English working paper series entitled "Indigenous and Tribal Children: Assessing Child Labour and Education Challenges" and looked forward to continued cooperation with the 17 other United Nations agencies in the Interagency Support Group.

48. In addition, ILO was continuing its two technical assistance programmes to support indigenous peoples: the first was the Interregional Programme to Support Self-Reliance of Indigenous and Tribal Communities through Cooperatives and other Self-Help Organizations, which had highlighted the importance of strengthening indigenous and tribal institutions, community ownership of development projects to ensure project sustainability and the creation of viable and sustainable livelihoods for those people, especially their women. The second was the project to promote ILO policy on indigenous and tribal peoples aimed at promoting the country execution of ILO Convention No. 169. In the Philippines, for example, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act had been drafted with ILO assistance. ILO was also implementing projects to strengthen indigenous organizations.

49. Indigenous and tribal peoples were still not effectively protected by existing laws and policies as national laws generally did not address their specific situations, characteristics and needs. That was why dialogue needed to be stimulated between governments and indigenous peoples and their interests protected. The International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was helping to bring more visibility to those issues.

50. **Ms. Chenoweth** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) stated that indigenous people were among the most vulnerable groups in terms of food and livelihood security because they depended on agricultural activity not only for their subsistence but also as their main source of income. For that reason, a good number of FAO programmes and activities had objectives directly related to the concerns of indigenous peoples and organizations and to the issues being considered at the second session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In 2001, FAO had established a focal point network to deal with indigenous issues. The network served as an internal forum for information exchange and support of the FAO work in that area.

51. In terms of nutrition and household food security, FAO, with support from the Government of the Netherlands, was working to bring sustainable agriculture and rural development to the coastal and riverside areas of Latin America, the African Great Lakes and the Mekong region. Additionally, together with McGill University of Canada, FAO was working on a methodology and procedures for documenting

traditional food systems of indigenous people with a view to reintroducing the consumption of native foods with the potential for alleviating micronutrient deficiencies.

52. Regarding food security and gender, FAO was technically backstopping socio-cultural and demographic research, including research on indigenous communities and how gender-specific local knowledge could offer greater understanding of natural resource management and enhance the sustainability of livelihoods.

53. FAO systematically incorporated, in the food insecurity and vulnerability profiles, information related to indigenous groups in each country. FAO had also completed a study on vulnerable groups in Viet Nam, Guatemala, Nepal and Ethiopia and had prepared a special report on mountain people in the context of the International Year of Mountains.

54. Through its Information Network on Post-Harvest Operations, FAO had consolidated, documented and disseminated information on the traditional processing and storage of a number of foods which were locally grown in developing countries. The World Intellectual Property Organization had supported the initiative because it provided a basis for documenting indigenous technologies and protecting them.

55. Together with the Global Environment Facility of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, FAO was undertaking an initiative aimed at the global recognition, conservation and sustainable management of agricultural heritage systems and their associated landscapes, biodiversity and knowledge systems throughout the world. The goal of that initiative was to support and strengthen agro-ecological and livelihood strategies of farming communities and indigenous peoples, conserve and value the goods and services they provided and mobilize national and global recognition as well as policy and institutional support.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.